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585 after about ten minutes, and about ten minutes more elapsed until the bride, still in bridal dress, and her party got into their car. They led the procession to Munṣif.

In Munṣif there was a large group observing the proceedings outside the groom's father's house. Upon arrival, the bride, standing on a chair in the door, slapped a piece of raw dough on the lintel above the door, molded it into a round bun shape, and made a cross on it with the heel of her hand. While still standing on the chair, she was provided with oranges which she threw at the people standing around. Then she walked inside. Two automobiles filled with relatives came with her from her village, and they included spouses of siblings who were strange to both villages. The bride, the groom, and his father stood in the *maq'ad* to receive congratulations.

Again, with the principals in the center, people sat themselves down in the *maq'ad*. *'Araq* and wine were offered around. A large crowd of children gathered at each door to watch—staring silently.

[535] The same dance performance as at the ceremony was carried out. However, the soloists included young men as well as women this time. After some solos, five persons, mostly of middle age, locked arms and danced a set of the *dabki*, the principal folk dance of Lebanon; and during the evening it was done several times more.

The bride disappeared for a long period, during which two large tables were brought in and placed parallel to each other in the upper and lower parts of the *maq'ad*. They were set with plates and glasses and bottles of *'araq*. *Tabbuuli*, cold *kibbi*, beans and bread were served.

When the bride reappeared, after changing into an ordinary dress, she took her place at the main table. The groom's sisters were active all the time bringing in food and collecting dishes. A large number of persons sat, neither eating nor taking [853] active part—just watching. These included the children. At one point, a woman sitting near the cabinets opened the front of her dress and began nursing a small baby. Later, another woman did the same with one of her small ones, sitting in the same place.

[533] The activity at the head table was enlivened by songs in praise of the bridal couple sung either by men standing behind the chairs or by others sitting down. At the end of each, arms would be raised and the high musical note, mentioned before, sung in unison. One man after another seemed to pick up the solo part rather casually after the previous phrase was finished. Some were well-known and conventional. In others, there would be laughter or nods, as if the singer had made up a clever verse impromptu, or said something with an apt and original turn of phrase. These songs of praise (*madaḥa*) were usually phrased in terms such as those which likened the bridal couple to the stars or the light of the sun. Many seemed to be known by heart by everyone, just as everyone seemed to know the dance steps.

The bride no longer wept, and for a long time, she sat next to her father-in-law, who sat in a corner, conversing quietly with him.